

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USBERL 02182 291724Z

64

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

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FM USMISSION USBERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 189

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 2182

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, WB, GW, GE, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR COMMEMORATION
OF WORLD WAR II VICTORY

REF: USBERLIN 2075

1. AT FILM/COCKTAIL FOR ALLIED OFFICERS AT SOVIET
EMB EAST BERLIN NOV 27, SOVIETS PURSUED
IDEA LAUNCHED BY AMB YEFREMOV WITH AMBASSADOR
HILLENBRAND NOV 11 THAT FOUR POWERS SHOULD JOIN
IN COMMEMORATING 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF VICTORY OVER
NAZISM NEXT MAY. SOVIET EMB FIRST SECRETARY
BURDAKIN TOLD WESTERN REPS THAT SOVIET EMB WOULD
PRESS THEIR PROPOSAL AT LUNCH WITH UK
AMBASSADOR HENDERSON (NOW SCHEDULED FOR JAN 10) AND
AT NEXT MEETING WITH FRENCH AMBASSADOR WORMSER.
FRENCH POLAD LEGRAIN SAID HE WOULD REPORT SOVIET
COMMENTS TO BONN ALONG WITH RECOMMENDATION THAT BONN
GROUP STUDY MATTER ON URGENT BASIS.

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PAGE 02 USBERL 02182 291724Z

2. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS, BURDAKIN WAS NOT DISCOURAGED BY UNENTHUSIASTIC REACTION OF US MISSION OFFICERS. HE SAID THAT "AT WORKING LEVEL" OF SOVIET EMB THERE SEEMED NO RPT NO REASON WHY WREATH-LAYING CEREMONY AT SOVIET WAR MEMORIAL IN WEST BERLIN (TIERGARTEN) COULD NOT BE MATCHED BY SIMILAR CEREMONY AT TREPTOW (EAST BERLIN). SOVIETS HAD NOT MENTIONED PROJECT YET TO EAST GERMANS, PREFERRING TO DEAL WITH ALLIES FIRST, BUT FORESAW NO OBJECTIONS. BURDAKIN CONTINUED TO PRESS FOR FIFTEEN-MINUTE SPEECHES TO BE MADE BY AMBASSADORS, BUT RELEGATED IDEA OF FOUR-POWER PARADE TO "FUTURE DISCUSSION" AFTER DECISION IS TAKEN ON IDEA OF CEREMONY ITSELF.

3. FRENCH MISSION IS INTRIGUED BY SOVIET PROPOSAL, PARTICULARLY THOUGHT THAT SOME 27 YEARS AGO AFTER SOVIETS WALKED OUT OF ALLIED KOMMANDATURA WESTERN AMBASSADORS MIGHT BE ASKED TO PARTICIPATE IN OFFICIAL CEREMONY IN EAST BERLIN. FRENCH MINISTER HAS INDICATED GENERAL RECEPTIVE ATTITUDE, WHILE FRENCH POLAD WAXED ELOQUENT IN PAINTING PICTURE AT FILM COCKTAIL OF TROOPS OF FOUR POWERS MARCHING THROUGH BRANDENBURGER GATE, BANDS PLAYING AND FLAGS FLYING. SOVIET EMBASSY OFFICERS HOLD THAT CEREMONY PROPOSAL ORIGINATED WITH AMBASSADOR YEFREMOV, BUT SOVIET PROTOCOL OFFICER ROMANOVSKIY SAID HE WAS SURE MOSCOW WOULD SUPPORT IDEA. (IT HAS BEEN POINTED OUT THAT IF WREATH-LAYING WERE NOT TO BE CONFINED EXCLUSIVELY TO SOVIET MEMORIALS, THERE IS BRITISH CEMETARY IN SPANDAU FOR FALLEN AIRMEN OF VARIOUS ALLIED NATIONALITIES.)

4. COMMENT: WHILE WE CAN UNDERSTAND FRENCH INTEREST IN CEREMONY CONCEPT, AND ARE ATTRACTED BY IDEA OF QUADRIPARTITE DEMONSTRATION IN EAST BERLIN, WE WOULD THINK OVERRIDING CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE HOW AFFAIR WOULD AFFECT GERMAN SENSITIVITIES AND FRG-(AS WELL AS GDR)-ALLIED RELATIONS. WE ACCORDINGLY ENDORSE FRENCH POLAD'S RECOMMENDATION THAT BONN GROUP STUDY MATTER ON URGENT BASIS. SELIGMANN

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